

MARKED-UP CLAIMS

Claims 1, 4, 7-9, 16-18, 33, 36, 39 and 44 have been amended as follows:

1. (Three Times Amended) A surveillance method for operating a general purpose computer to provide remote surveillance of an internal area of a building, comprising:

receiving a surveillance image from a local camera directed at the internal area of the building;

comparing the surveillance image with a reference image to produce a comparison result;

detecting presence of an activity condition based on the comparison result; and

notifying an interested user of the activity condition when the presence of the activity condition is detected,

wherein said notifying includes[,] at least transmitting the surveillance image to a remote computer over a network automatically when the activity condition is detected, and

wherein said transmitting includes forming an electronic mail message having a predetermined mailing address, the predetermined mailing address being associated with the interested user, and electronically mailing the surveillance image to the remote computer over the network using the electronic mail message.

4. (Once Amended) A surveillance method as recited in claim 1, wherein the network [includes] comprises the Internet, and wherein said transmitting operates to transmit the surveillance image over the Internet to the remote computer.

7. (Once Amended) A surveillance method as recited in claim [6] 1, wherein said notifying further comprises:

providing a distinctive audio or visual indication on the remote computer to notify the interested user of the receipt of the activity condition after the electronically mailed surveillance image arrives at the remote computer.

8. (Three Times Amended) A system for providing remote visual monitoring of a location, said system comprising:

a camera for obtaining an image of the location;

a remote computer having a display device capable of viewing images, said remote computer being remote from the location;

a local general purpose computer operatively connected to said camera, said local general purpose computer operates to receive the image from the camera and [then] to determine whether an activity condition is present,

wherein said local general purpose computer automatically forwards the image to said remote computer over a network when the activity condition is present, and said local general purpose computer does not forward the image to said remote computer over the network when the activity condition is not present, and

wherein when forwarding the image to said remote computer over the network, said local general purpose computer automatically creates an electronic mail message to a predetermined user associated with the remote computer, the electronic mail message having the image included or attached thereto, and then automatically sends the electronic mail message to said remote computer for the predetermined user.

9. (Once Amended) A system as recited in claim 8, wherein the network [includes] comprises the Internet[, and wherein said local image controller forwards the image to said remote computer by establishing a network connection to the Internet, and directing the transmission of the image over the Internet to the remote computer].

16. (Once Amended) A system as recited in claim 8, wherein said system further comprises a security system having at least one sensor, and

wherein said security system detects an alarm condition, the activity condition is made to be present [regardless of the image].

17. (Once Amended) A system as recited in claim 8, wherein said system further comprises a security system having at least one sensor, and

wherein said security system detects an alarm condition, said local [image controller] general purpose computer causes the image and alarm status information to be forwarded over the network to said remote computer.

18. (Once Amended) A system as recited in claim 17, wherein the image and the alarm status information are displayed on a display device of [the] said remote computer.

33. (Once Amended) A method as recited in claim 32, wherein the network of computers comprises [is] the Internet.

36. (Once Amended) A method for remotely controlling home appliances associated with a home over an Internet network, comprising the operations of:

connecting the home appliances to a first processing unit located in the home, with the first processing unit capable of coupling to the Internet network;

communicating a control signal through a graphical user interface associated with a second processing unit that is remotely located from the first processing unit and also capable of coupling to the Internet network;

wherein the control signal is directed from the second processing unit to at least one of the home appliances via the Internet network and the first processing unit, and the control signal causes a change in an operating state of the at least one of the home appliances when received by the at least one of the home appliances.

39. (Once Amended) A method for operating a general purpose computer to detect an activity condition using a camera, comprising the acts of:

(a) receiving a reference image from a camera directed in a predetermined direction;

(b) storing a reference image;

(c) receiving a current image from a camera directed in the predetermined direction;

(d) comparing the current image with the reference image to detect an activity condition; and

(e) signaling an [activity] alarm condition when said comparing detects the activity condition without using any special purpose hardware other than the general purpose computer and the camera [; the signaling of the activity condition including the transmission of a message over a network to a remote computer, the message including a video clip to enable viewing of the activity condition that caused the signaling of the alarm condition].

44. (Once Amended) A method as recited in claim 41, wherein the activity condition indicates detection of an intruder, and wherein the sequence of images [defines the] is a video clip.